

O K L A H O M A



All Together Now:

“Acknowledging and Addressing
the Needs
Of Children with Incarcerated
Parents”

O K L A H O M A



Honorable Jeannie McDaniel House of Representatives

History

- **Legislation House Bill 1197**
- **Goal was to examine the needs of children with a parent in prison, focusing on seven key tasks:**
 1. Safety Protocols
 2. Data Collection
 3. Outreach and Education
 4. Economic Supports
 5. Research
 6. Resource Clearinghouse
 7. Review existing legislation affecting children with incarcerated parents

O K L A H O M A



**Lisa Smith, Executive Director
Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth**

- Legislation Senate Joint Resolution 48, 2004
- First Task Force
- The study of children of incarcerated mothers, three part series of reports
- Partnership with Susan F. Sharp, Ph.D., University of Oklahoma

O K L A H O M A



- In July 31, 2004, Oklahoma's female prison population was 2,351
- In the first phase of the study, 203 female prisoners were administered a survey
- Survey questions on demographics, criminal record, and information about families such as contact with children, placement of children, and problems with children

O K L A H O M A



Who's providing food, shelter and basic necessities for these children?

- Children's care arrangements are often handled informally by family members
- Remaining family members must take on the parent's roles and responsibilities
- Drastic reductions in parental income
- Financial hardship
- Stigma, shame, guilt, and pain of dealing with a family member's incarceration

O K L A H O M A



How are children affected by the incarcerated parent

- Trauma
- Financial hardship
- Social stigma
- Insecurity/Instability
- Neglect

O K L A H O M A



Direct Impact on a Child Due to Parental Incarceration

- Bad Grades
- School Drop Out
- Trouble with Guardian/Authorities
- Run Away
- Alcohol Problems
- Drug Problems
- Depression
- Suicidal

O K L A H O M A



- Oklahoma data strongly imply that children of incarcerated parents are at-risk for negative outcomes such as drug use and criminal behaviors in adulthood.
- Most come from homes with mental illnesses
- Homes where the mother has been battered
- Many are at-risk of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse and neglect

O K L A H O M A



Honorable April Sellers White, Retired
Co-Chair

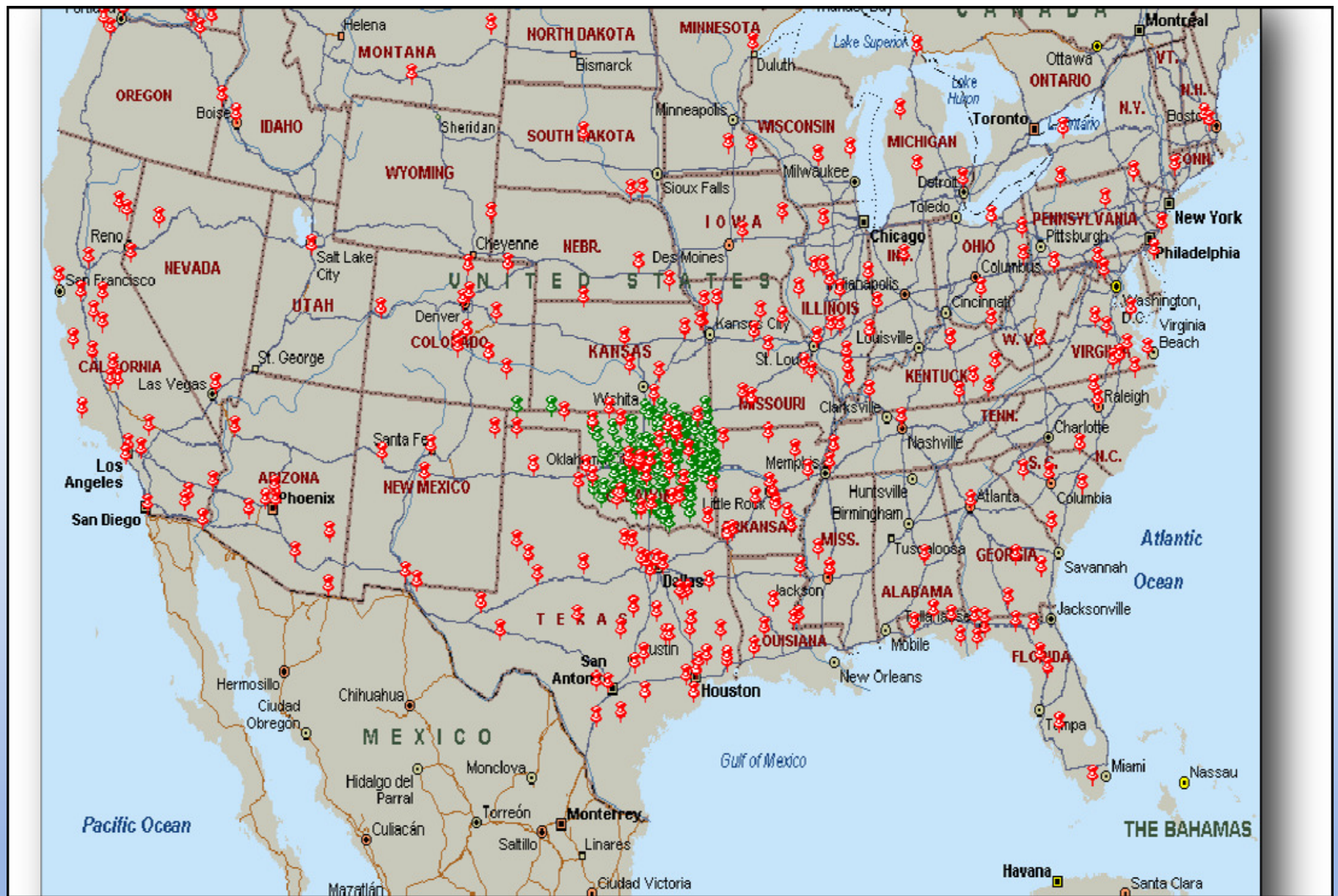
Oklahoma Children of Incarcerated Parents , OCIP

- Broad range of stakeholders
- Networking together to look at the needs of children with a parent in prison
- To determine the scope of the problem facing Oklahoma's children, and
- Gathering data on the number of children impacted by incarceration

O K L A H O M A



- Used data from the Oklahoma Study of Incarcerated Women and Their Children
- Developed and administered survey to sample of incarcerated men to estimate number of children with an incarcerated father
- Data from Department Of Corrections visitation logs
- Data from Prison Fellowship Ministries Project Angel Tree



O K L A H O M A



Project Angel Tree Data

- There are many children in Oklahoma with a parent incarcerated in another state
- There are many children in Oklahoma with parent incarcerated in a county jail
- This means that our data underestimates the number of children impacted by parental incarceration

O K L A H O M A



Oklahoma Study of Incarcerated Women 2009 Report

- Minor children with incarcerated mother: 4,624

Oklahoma Children of Incarcerated Task Force 2012 Report

- Minor Children with Incarcerated father: 21,482

**Total estimated number of children with incarcerated parent
on a given day**

26,106

**This does not reflect local and county jails or federal
prisons**

O K L A H O M A



Oklahoma Children of Incarcerated Parents Committee

- In 2012, legislation was passed mandating OCCY administer the Oklahoma Children of Incarcerated Parents Advisory Committee
- To look at the safety and well-being of children whose parents are incarcerated
- Working collaboratively with agencies and service providers to better meet the needs of children whose parents are incarcerate
- Legislative Brief 2013

O K L A H O M A



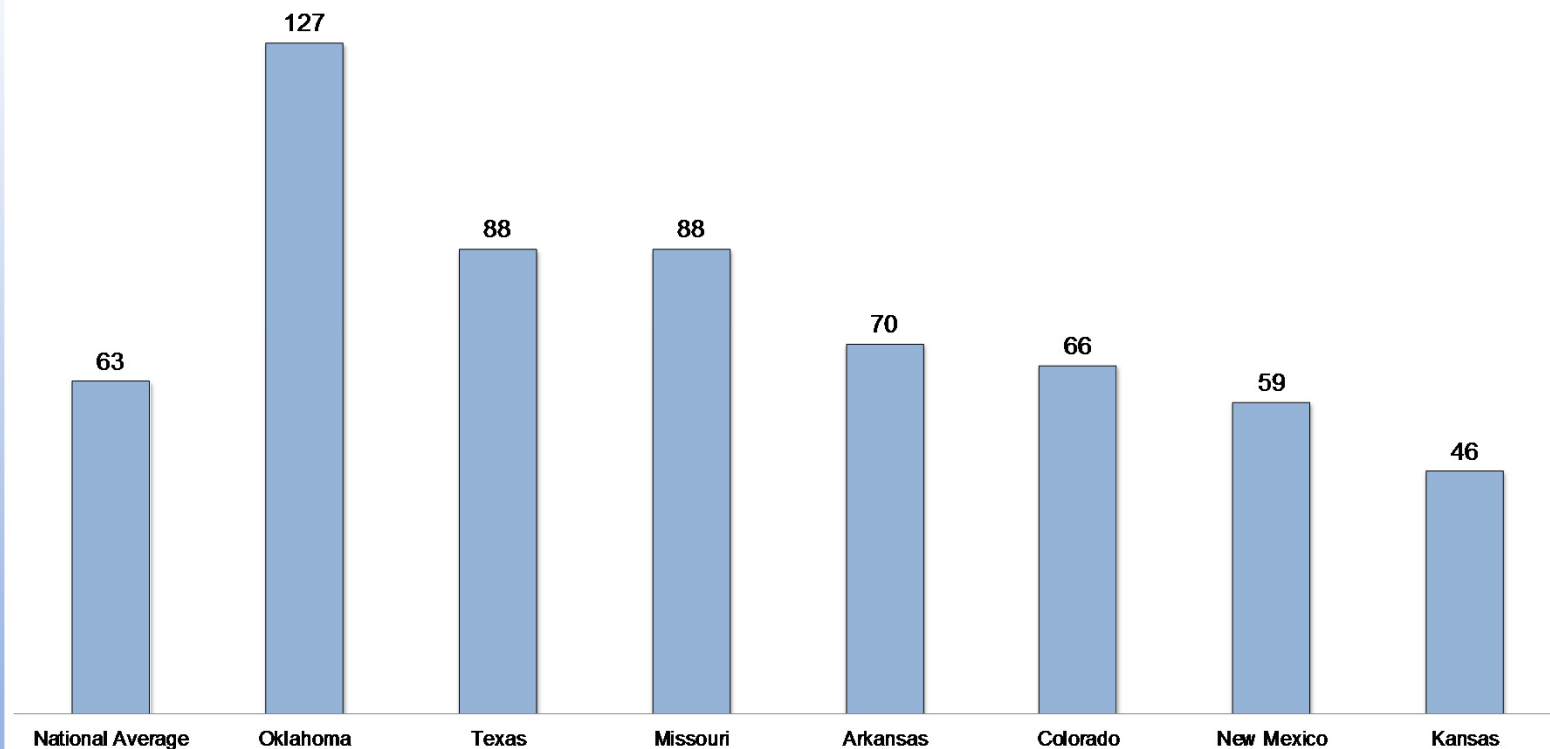
Laura J. Pitman, M.B.A., Ph.D.
Deputy Director of Division I-Institutions
(Female Offenders)

- **Incarceration of Women in Oklahoma**
 - As of October 31, 2013, 26,270 men and women were incarcerated in the Oklahoma prison system
 - 1,634 men and women are awaiting reception to prison
 - Additional 24,241 are under probation or parole supervision
 - Not every offender has minor children
 - Many have more than one child under the age of 18

O K L A H O M A



**Female Incarceration Rates
Contiguous States End of Calendar Year 2012**



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2012-Advance Counts Table 8. Imprisonment Rates of Sentenced Prisoners Under Jurisdiction of State and Federal Correctional Authorities, by Jurisdiction and Sex, December 31, 2011 and 2012.

O K L A H O M A



- At the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2013, 2,702 women were imprisoned in the State of Oklahoma
- In FY 2013, 1,152 women were received into the Department of Corrections and 1,081 women completed their sentences and were released
- 35% of female offenders served less than one year in prison
- The average length of stay per offender is 2.02 years
- At the end of Fiscal Year 2013, the recidivism rate for females released in Fiscal Year 2010 and returning within 3 years was 13.3%
- Controlling Offense Categories for FY 2013 Receptions
 - Possession/Obtaining CDS (26.2%)
 - Distribution CDS (16.6%)
 - Assault (11.8%)

O K L A H O M A



Pathways to Incarceration

- History of Trauma and Violence

301 female offenders were surveyed:

- 61.1% (N=184) reported someone in home with drinking problem
- 46.8 % (N=141) reported someone in home with drug problem
- 47.2% (N=142) reported mental illness in the home
- 61.1% (N=184) reported divorced parents
- 31.6% (N=95) reported one or both parents incarcerated
- 52.5% (N=158) reported running away from home before age 18

In Childhood

- Child Physical and/or Sexual Abuse (66.4%)
- Father Violent (42.9%)
- Mother Violent (28.6%)

In Adulthood

- Domestic Violence (71.1%)
- Rape After Age 18 (36.2%)

Source: Oklahoma Study of Incarcerated Mothers and Their Children, January 22, 2010; Susan F. Sharp, Ph.D., Emily Pain, and the Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth.

O K L A H O M A



- **History of Substance Abuse and Addiction**
 - Of the 1,152 female offenders received in FY 2013, 704 (61%) were assessed with a moderate to high need for substance abuse treatment.
- **Mental Health Issues**
 - 74.9% of incarcerated women in the state of Oklahoma have a history of or are currently being treated for mental illnesses
- **Medical Issues**
- **Economic Marginalization and Poverty**

For Women Entering DOC in FY 2013

 - 95.5% were unemployed at the time of arrest
 - 77.3% were frequently unemployed when in the labor market
 - 79.9% reported difficulty managing their finances at the time of arrest
 - 62.7% reported reliance on social assistance at the time of arrest
 - 74.6% had a need for education (e.g., Literacy, Adult Basic Education, General Equivalency Diploma)
- **Race and Ethnicity**
 - Black and Native American women are disproportionately represented in the Oklahoma prison system.

O K L A H O M A



Women Offenders As Mothers

- 301 women were surveyed
 - 257 (85.4%) had at least one child
 - Among them, these 257 women had 760 children
 - 65.4% (497) of these children were under age 18
- Extrapolated
 - 2,308 incarcerated women have at least one child
 - Among them, these 2,308 women have 6,825 children
 - 4,464 of these children are under age 18
- Where Are the Children Now?
 - Other Parent (31.0%)
 - Maternal Grandmother (28.3%)
 - Mother's Sibling (8.0%)
 - Other Relatives of Mother (8.0%)
 - Partner's Mother (5.9%)
 - Foster Care (5.9%)

Source: Oklahoma Study of Incarcerated Mothers and Their Children, January 22, 2010; Susan F. Sharp, Ph.D., Emily Pain, and the Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth.

O K L A H O M A



Sharla J. Owens, Chief Executive Officer

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Oklahoma

Mission Statement

Provide children facing adversity with strong and enduring, professionally supported one-to-one relationships that change their lives for the better, forever.



O K L A H O M A



Ernest Coulter **New York City, 1904**



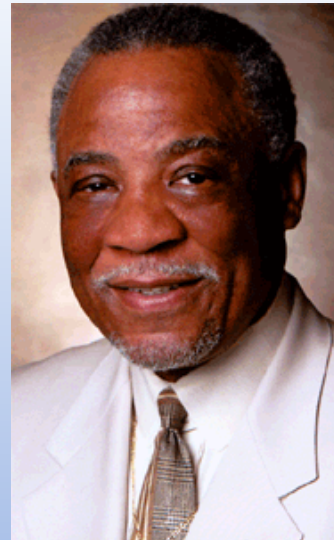
NYC Court Clerk

Saw repeat juvenile offenders in his court

Decided they needed someone like a "big brother"

Recruited his colleagues to mentor the boys

Reverend Dr. Wilson Goode **Philadelphia, PA**



Founder of Amachi Program, 2000

Former Philadelphia Mayor

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Education, Clinton Administration

Father was incarcerated

O K L A H O M A



Amachi

Goal: To break the intergenerational cycle of crime and incarceration by matching children of incarcerated and formerly incarcerated parents with a caring adult mentor.

Nationwide:

Program in all 350 agencies, in all 50 states

Over 300,000 children of incarcerated parents served since 2000

Nigerian word:

“Who knows what God has brought us through this child?”

O K L A H O M A



Amachi Texas Study – Results, results, results

Short-term (Within six months)

Significant, positive differences in:

relationship with parent/caregiver,
self-esteem/self-worth,
sense of having a real future

Long-term (12+ months)

Continued increases in family
relationships,
self-esteem higher than peers,
greater connections to
school/community,
positive perception about ability to
make friends

School related outcomes - attitudes toward school became more
positive and both literacy and discipline improved across time

O K L A H O M A



How The Program Works

Child of Incarcerated Parent + Mentor + Agency

School-based

1 hour/week

At local elementary schools

Teachers/counselors refer children

Community-based

Several times a month

Various low cost/no cost
community activities

BBBS Amachi program

- Qualified professional staff
- Careful matching of bigs and littles
- Child Safety is our number one priority
- On-going match support and training

O K L A H O M A



Partnership with OCCY and OJA

- 3 year grant through state funding to mentor children of incarcerated parents and younger siblings of children in juvenile system
- Serving 83 children right now, will match 109 over next 18 months
- Tracking outcomes to report to Legislature

O K L A H O M A



O K L A H O M A



Questions and Answers

O K L A H O M A



THANK YOU!

Oklahoma Children of Incarcerated Parents Advisory
Committee

April Sellers White, Co-Chair

AprilSellersWhite@gmail.com

Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth

1111 North Lee Avenue, Suite 500

Oklahoma City, OK 73103

405-606-4900